

Shop Stewards upbeat despite tough road ahead

PT & A units ready for action



With the County projecting a \$60 million deficit, the sales-tax measure facing Republican blockade, and a climate so hostilely anti-labor that Councilmember Dunn is running around the County calling it a “work-free drug zone,” Teamsters at King County will need to be organized, informed, and engaged in order to achieve outcomes in bargaining that protect the rights of working families.

“We have to be united and stick together and encourage our fellow members to do the same,” said Vicki Moore, one of 18 Shop Stewards from the Professional, Technical and Administrative Support job classifications who gathered at the Teamsters Building on May 22 to prepare for upcoming negotiations. “This is going to be a tough bargain and our ability to mobilize people is going to be crucial.”

“There was a lot of good dialogue and a lot of good ideas,” said Jennifer Broadus, a new Steward in the County’s Solid Waste Division. “People brought insights from their own experience. It was important to come together and pool our resources.”

The morning’s agenda kicked off with a welcome from King County Business Representatives, Betty Sorbo and Cynthia Adams, followed by an overview of the bargaining process from Local 117 Staff Attorney

and Public Sector Coordinator, Jim Smith.

Director of Organizing, Leonard Smith, led the group in a discussion about bargaining surveys. Then Local 117 General Counsel, Spencer Thal, talked about the structure of the bargaining teams, and discussed the pros and cons of the units bargaining individually or collectively.

Communications Coordinator, Paul Zilly, touched on the many ways members can stay informed and engaged throughout the bargaining process, such as signing up to become registered users of the Local 117 website, joining the Local 117 Facebook group page, and reading the monthly print newsletters that

are scheduled through the end of the year.

The day ended with a call for volunteers to serve on communications and political action committees. Participating members would speak out at media events, as well as engage in lobbying visits and other political action activities.

Overall, the meeting was a success, Broadus said. “This is the time to be more visible and start building things up. I’ve been sending out a lot of emails, asking people what their demands are. We’ve got to be active and work together.”

Want to get involved?

Sign up for the political action or communications committee

Looking for ways to get involved in upcoming labor negotiations at the County?

Sign up to become a member of your Local Union’s Political Action and Communications committees.

On the communications side, responsibilities include joining a “speakers’ bureau” that will field interviews with reporters, speak out at community meetings, and

organize press events.

On the political front, members will engage in lobbying visits, petition drives, labor-neighbor doorbelling, voter registration, and letter and email writing campaigns.

To get involved, talk to your Business Representative or sign up on your Local Union’s website at www.teamsters117.org.